ΚΡΥΠΤΕΤΧΟΛΟΓΙΑ

OR, A PLAIN

ANSWER

TO THIS

Practical Question,

What course may a Christian take to have his Heart quickned and enlarged in the Duty of Secret Prayer?

BY

RICHARD MAYO, late of *Kingston* upon *Thames.*

Psalm 80. 18. *Quicken us, O Lord, and we will call upon thy Name.*

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TO THE READER.

Reader,

I Was the more willing to print this Letter (though penn'd at first for the closet of a particular Friend, and not in a fit dress to come abroad) because it contains an Answer to a Question that every Christian is ready to ask, and none (so far as I can learn) did ever yet undertake to resolve; or if any have obliquely touched it, never any did directly handle it.

A small Structure must not have a great Porch: I shall only suggest these two preliminary Exhortations.

1. *Be much in the duty of Secret Prayer; be as constant at it as at your (a) meals. Amongst many motives, this is one; 'Tis a duty wherein God doth ordinarily make the greatest discoveries of himself:* Joseph *and his Brethren were alone when he made himself known to them. The secrets of the Lord are usually revealed unto his People when they are seeking him in secret; then 'tis, that he gives them his (b) loves, when they fall down upon their knees unto him, he falls upon their necks and kisseth them. (c) They are never less alone than when alone.*

(a) a Morning, evening, and noon-day. So *David. Joachim* the father of the Virgin *Mary*, used to say, That Prayer was his meat and drink. See *Daniel*'s practice, *Dan. 6. 10.*

(b) *O anima sancta sola esto, ne scis verecundum te habere sponsum?* (c) *Nunquam minus solus, quam cum solus.*

2. *Be warm and lively in the Duty. A dead prayer is no more accepted with God, than of old the offering up of a beast that was found dead in a ditch. The Ass under the Law was not to be offered unto God, but his neck must be broke; not that God was angry with that creature which was the workmanship of his hands, but to shew how distastful a dull and a dead heart is to him in his service. Sometimes Christians go to prayer as sick persons to their meals, because they must eat, and 'tis dinner time, and the like; not that they desire or delight in their food, or find any refreshment thereby. If it be thus with thee in reference to Prayer, thou art greatly distempered, thy condition is very dangerous, therefore look out speedily for help. May this following Letter contribute something thereunto: the* LORD *set in with it for that end.*

A PLAIN ANSWER TO THIS Practical Question,

What course may a Christian take to have his heart quickned and enlarged in the Duty of Secret Prayer?

Christian Friend,

OUR question favours of a spirit truly gracious. It supposeth you already convinced of, and perswaded to the practice of that necessary, though neglected, Duty of Secret Prayer. It shews, you do not take up with a bare performance of Duty, as too many do, not caring how or in what manner it be performed. It argues you would present God with the *Male of your flock*, and not put him off *with a corrupt thing*. These are good signs of sincerity.

I could heartily wish that all Christians would follow your example, to propose such profitable Questions as may promote Piety, and to avoid *Such* (a) *foolish questions as do engender strifes.*

(a) 2 Tim. 2. 23.

I would not be wanting to you in so pious a request as this is: And oh that I could say, that (b) *What I here declare unto you I have seen and felt my self*; that what is here expresst, is the same which I my self have experienc'd.

(b) 1 Joh. 1. 3.

It is besides your desire and my design to write concerning the duty of Secret Prayer at large; to open the nature of it, to shew the necessity of it, to lay down arguments to move you to it, to advise in what manner you should manage it; namely, with Faith, with fervency, with humility, with sincerity, with constancy, with watchfulness, in the Spirit, and the like: this work is done by my hand in many Treatises, and those extant, some of them, (c) in our own Language. I shall therefore strictly keep to the Question propounded, which I acknowledg is of greatest concernment. God is a living God, and they that worship him must worship him with warmth and (d) life; such Suppliants he seeketh after.

c *Cobbet* his practical Discourse of Prayer, *Philip Goodwin* his Family Religion revived, from *pag.* 149, *to* 155.

(d) *Ejusmodi cultum probat Deus qui ejus naturæ congruit. Cal. in Joh.* 4. 23.

Meet helps then in this case are such as follow.

1. Remember to observe the fittest season for the performance of this duty. Though Christia

Christian is to pray at all times, yet at all times he is not alike fit for Prayer. This you find by experience. 1. As many a fair Child is lost by an untimely birth, so many a good duty is marr'd by an undue timing of it.

Of many apt seasons, I shall mention these three.

1. When you meet with any new occurrence of Providence. Every fresh dispensation of Providence is a provocation unto Prayer. When any affliction befals thee, then fall down before God, and humble thy self under his afflicting hand. (e) *Is any amongst you afflicted? let him pray*, says the Apostle; that is, Let him then do it more especially, then there is a fit opportunity for it.

(e) James 5. 13.

Præsertim curandum est quoties aliquâ rerum angustiâ, aut ipsi premimur, aut premi alios videmus, ut ad Deum citatis, non pedibus, sed animis recurramus. Deinde, ne quam aut nostrum aut aliorum prosperitatem præterire sinamus; quin laude, ac gratiarum actione, manum ejus agnoscere nos testemur. Cal. Institt. lib. 3.

Again, when any fresh mercy is conferred upon thee, then it is a fit season to go aside and to acknowledg thine unworthiness, and to express thy thankfulness. See an excellent instance for this in 2 *Sam.* 7. 18. the words are these, Then went King *David* in, and sat before the Lord, and said, *Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?* Mark that particle,

then. Why when was it? See the foregoing verse, when God by *Nathan* had made many promises and that of great mercies to him, then he went in, and sate before the Lord, and said; Who am I? *&c.*

The *Reader* may dilate his thoughts upon this, and the following particulars: I intend only brief hints.

2. When you find the Spirit of God moving upon your Soul, and exciting you to the duty, then it is a fit season for it: Now God calls upon you to come and converse with him, he invites you now to communion with himself. Think at such a time, that the Lord bespeaks you in such a manner as he doth the Spouse, *Cant.* 2. 10. *Rise up my love, my fair one and come away*; Or as 'tis vers. 14. *Come, let me hear thy voice, for it is sweet.* To pray at such a season is to hoise up sail before the wind; it is like rowing both with wind and tide, being thus excited by the Spirit, you may expect the assistance of it: If Prayer be now neglected, the Spirit of God is quenched; and I'le pronounce him a novice in Religion, or rather a stranger to it altogether, that doth not confess it necessary to the lively performance of this Duty, that the Spirit of God doth act and quicken him therein. Our motions are exceeding dull and heavy in holy duties, when the Spirit of God *doth not help our infirmities.* Whensoever therefore God say's by the secret whis-

whiſperings of his Spirit, *Seek my face*, our hearts ſhould anſwer and eccho back as *Davids* did, *Thy face, O Lord, we will ſeek.* Yet here I would have it remembred, I do not ſay a Chriſtian ſhould never pray, but when he finds the Spirit of God egging him forward; this hath been the groſs miſtake of ſome, who hereupon have diſcontinued the duty for ſeveral days together, becauſe they have not perceived the Spirit moving them thereunto: No, let this be thy practice, to wait upon God in his way, and it may be the Spirit of God will meet thee therein. Know this, though the Spirit of God ſhould not put forth his hand to lead thee, yet the Word of God holds forth a precept to command thee, and ſet thou about the duty out of pure obedience to the command of God. It may be e're thou art aware, *thou wilt find Him whom thy Soul deſires.* Though the Spirits aſſiſtance be never unwelcome to a Child of God, yet many times it comes unexpected. *Abraham* ſaw not the Ram for the Sacrifice till he was in the Mount. Often in the Mount in the time of prayer, the Spirit of the Lord is ſeen and felt. Mariners have put forth to ſea in a calm, when they have made but little way, and anon they have met with an unexpected gale of wind, that hath brought them with full ſail to their deſired haven. I leave you to apply it.

Again,

Again, I do not deny but the evil Spir
who is *God*'s Ape, may sometimes transfor
himself into the likeness of *God*'s Spirit, an
may excite a Christian to this Duty: bu
then his motions are irregular and unseason
able; they tend to the hindering of him fro
another, and (for that time) a more season
able duty; suppose it a work of mercy t
himself, or others, or such like. Christian ex
ercises must be wisely subordinated one t
another; whereas the Devil desires to mak
them interfere, and to set them at variance

3. When we find our hearts in a settle
and composed frame, then also it is a fi
(g) Psalm. 57. 7. season for secret prayer, when *g* (as *David*'s *our hearts are fixt*, and not pre-occupied wit
any secular matters. To pray at another tim
is like playing upon an Instrument that i
out of tune; what harsh and unpleasin
melody doth it make? Many when they g
(h) 2 Sam. 7. 27. In the Hebrew 'tis only, *He found to* pray. to seek God, they have their heart to seek
Few can say with *David* that (*h*) *they hav found their hearts to pray.* We render it h *found in his heart*, but it may be read, *he foun his heart* to pray a prayer unto God.

(*i*) It was the custom of the Heathens to address themselves in the morning ea
(*i*) Usually in the morning the mind i
most composed; then a man meets with lea
ly to their Idols, *vid. Herod. l.* 10. The primitive Christian were wont to be early at their devotions. *Vid. Pl. Ep.* 57 *Trajan. Tertul. Apol. c.* 2[illegible] See *Christ*'s practice, *Marc.* 1. 3 *Qui mane surgit [illegible] causa, dicit manicare Deum. Drus.*

diver

diverſions in duty; the evenings repoſe hath in great part diſcharged the mind of all that did diſtract it: and it were well if we would be with God as ſoon as we awake: if we did offer up to him the firſt-fruits of every day; if as ſoon as we lift our bodies off our beds, we did in prayer lift up our Souls to God. This was *David*'s manner, *Pſal.* 5 3. Under this Head I will ſuggeſt theſe three cautionary Rules.

1. Do not take prayer in hand when you have any other matter in hand: if ſo, your *attendance upon God* muſt needs be *with diſtraction*, and your heart will be ſtollen from you, do what you can. Set by all worldly occaſions when you ſet about this duty: ſay to them as (*k*) *Abraham* did to his young men, *Stay you here while I go aſide to worſhip God.* (*k*) Gen. 22. 5.

2. Do not ordinarily go to prayer when your anger is ſtirred, and your mind full of perturbations; if you do, 'tis ten to one but you will offer up the *ſacrifice of a fool*, and *ſpeak unadviſedly with your lips.* The (*l*) Apoſtle's advice is, that *we lift up to God holy hands without wrath.* (*m*) *God was not in the wind, nor in the earth quake, nor in the fire that paſſed by* Elijah, *but in the ſtill ſmall voice.* And you muſt be of ſtill and quiet ſpirits, if you will ſee or find him. (*l*) 1 Tim. 2. 8. (*m*) 1 Kings 19. 11, 12.

3. Do not uſually engage in prayer when you are inclin'd to ſleep and drowſineſs; if ſo

so, you are like to make but dull and drow
(n) Matt. sie work of it. (n) The rebukes of *Chri*
26. 40,41. could not awake Disciples to prayer whe
their hearts *were heavy and asleep.* You mu
be wakeful when you pray, if you woul
watch unto prayer.

2. A second help is this: Allot and se
out a due proportion of time for this Duty
It is not enough to choose a fit time for pra
yer, but you must allow sufficient time t
prayer. No Service, whether secular or sp
ritual can be done well, unless you allow
due proportion of time for the doing of it
How is prayer huddled and slubbered ove
many times for want of this? you think o
making an end as soon as you begin, you
are straightned in your prayers, because you
are straightned in your time.

Qu. If you should ask, How much time
must a Christian set apart in a day for secret
prayer?

Ans In my Answer I must have respect
to the callings and conditions of Christians:
that time is sufficient for one, which is not
sufficient for another. 'Tis observable that
under the Law there were different Sacrifi-
ces for the rich and for the poor: God requi-
red that Mens Sacrifices should hold some
proportion with their abilities. And by
parity of reason, God looks that the rich,
and those that have little else to do, should
double the time of the poor in prayer, and of
those

hose whose callings call for their continual ttendance.

And yet I must add this too, let a mans ondition be never so mean, and let his nployment be never so urgent, it will not e a sufficient Apology for his neglecting or urtailing the duty of Prayer. *(o) Time ust be redeem'd*, and that for this very end, hold communion with GOD in this ury.

(o) Col. 4. 2. comp. with 5.

This premised I come to the Question, herein I may not be positive; that would e an unwarrantable presumption. I have ften thought that one hour in four and venty, is as little as any one can set apart r secret prayer. *(p)* And if this should seem any a hard saying, I desire they would nsider, whether they don't spend two ery day about things less necessary. Let em cast up the time they cast away (more an they need) in sleeping, eating, and inking; then let them add thereunto the me they spend in sports, or recreations, in le visits, in unprofitable studies or musings in empty chat, or conference with friends d neighbours; and see if the product will t be so much or more: and will any that *me the name of Christ*, grudge an hour in a

(p) *Luther* spent three hours in prayer every day, see *Vitus Theod. in Vita ejus.* Judge *Cook* advised to four in a day; *Sex horas somno, totidem des legibus æquis; quar orabis, des epulisque duas. Quod superest sacris ultro lare camœnis.* King *Alfred* divided every day into three parts; allowed eight hours to his devotion, eight to his employment, d eight to his sleep and refection.

day

day for prayer, when they can spend two, or it may be, more in the meer pleasing of the Flesh? is this consistent with Christianity? Won't such be filled with horror (as many (q) others for the same reason have been) at the hour of Death? Can they answer it at that day when God will reckon with them for every talent he hath entrusted them with, and for that of time in particular?

(q) One dreadfully schriecht out on her Death-bed these words, A world of wealth for an inch of time.

Another when Friends comforted her as she lay a dying, said; Call time again; no comfort, unless you can call time again. *Chrysorius* prayed, *Inducias Domine usque ad mane.*

If this Letter should fall into the hands of any person, who hath resolved, or doth resolve to redeem an hour or more every day for secret prayer; let him consider, whether it would not help to quicken and enlarge his heart, if he did morning, or evening, or when he finds himself best disposed thereto, enter into his Closet and turn up an hour-glass, and purpose within himself, to see the last sand run out, before he gave out or left praying. I do not propose this as an every days practice, but at some certain seasons only. It hath I confess its inconveniences, but withal it hath its advantages: hereby the heart is engaged more firmly to the work. Now it will not put by the present opportunity by propounding another. If thy heart be as mine, it is apt to say to thee when at prayer, as *Felix* said to *Paul*, Go thy way for this time, and come again at a more convenient season. And further, thou wilt fall to the duty with the more fervency; for thus thou wilt reason with thy self; So much

much time I am resolved to spend in this service, and I were better spend it in wrestling with God, than in trifling with God and with prayer: I were better do the business in hand with all my might, and stir up myself to call upon God, for during such a space of time I resolve to do nothing else.

I know 'tis the opinion of (r) many, that, as some persons do by their meals, they eat little and often; so Christians should do by their prayers. And in case of great indisposition I judge it advisable; when they have toiled a while and can catch nothing, they may take up their nets, and mend them against another season, and yet I will not discommend such a one that resolves he will catch something, or he will toil all night; that purposeth in his heart (as (ſ) one once did) that he will not go from God without God.

(r) *Dicuntur fratres in Ægypto crebras orationes habere & eas breviſſimas, ne illa vigilantia erecta, quæ oranti plurimum neceſſaria eſt, per productiores morus evaneſcat, atque hebetetur intentio,* Aug. ad Prob. *Caſſian* makes mention of some in his time, *qui utilius cenſebant, breves quidem orationes ſed crebriſſimas fieri.* (ſ) *Nunquam abi te abſque te diſcedam. Paulus Æmilius* being to fight with the *Macedonians*, would never give over sacrificing to his god *Hercules*, till he had some sign of victory.

3. Another Help to this Duty is, to take pains with your heart beforehand, to prepare it thereunto, 'tis usually from the neglect of preparation, that we find such deadness and indisposition in secret prayer. Alas! the heart is not all on a sudden lifted up into Heaven, many times the prayer is almost ended,

ended before we begin to pray. There is no Religious Duty but it must have some previous preparation: this is evident both by the light of (t) Scripture, and of (u) Nature, but prayer requires it in a more especial manner: see how those two, Preparation and Prayer, are conjoyn'd, *Jo.* 11. 13.

(t) *Pſ.* 26. 6. *Exo* 19. 10, 11, 12. The Books of *Levitic.* and *Num.*

are full of *Scriptures* to the same purpose. (u) *Tu genitor cape ſacra manu patrioſq; penates; Me bello è tanto digreſſum & cæde recenti Attrectare nefas, donec me flumine vivo Abluero. Virg. Æn.* 2. *Procul hinc, procul eſte prophani, Conclamat vates, totoq; abſiſtite luco.*

This is a trite Theam, and often inculcated therefore I shall passe it: only let me advise you, when ever you go to prayer, (if your leisure will permit) to read first one or more Chapters in the Bible; and do not gallop over the Scripture when you read it, as the most doe; but pause a little at the end of every verse or sentence, and whilst you pause, † Pray; the Scripture as you read it will put words into your mouth, and suggest meditations, which are fit matter for prayer unto your minds, though some parts of Scripture, especially the *Pſalms*, are more apt for this purpose than others; and if any passage be obscure, put a mark upon it, and propose it to the next able Minister, or Christian thou meetest with to be resolved and for the present, pray in *David's* language

(† *Lectionem frequenter interrumpat oratio, & animum jugiter adhærentem Deo grata vicissitudo ſanctæ orationis accendat; Hieron. in Ep.* (y) A good course prevents idle and unprofitable discourse.

guage

guage, or to that purpose, that (z) *God would open thine eyes to see and to understand the wondrous things of his Law.*

(z) Psal. 119.18.

4. A fourth and further Help is this, to have right conceptions of God all along the duty; to conceive of him as he is, and as he hath revealed himself in his Word to be. This will greatly conduce to the quickning of you. Conceive of him,

1. As of an omnipresent God; that he is really, though not visibly present in all places, and in that place where thou art a praying more particularly; that he sees thy heart as plainly as thou canst see thine own hands, that he observeth thee as narrowly, as if thou only wert alive in all the World, or as if thou alone of all the children of men wert making thy supplication to him. Whenever thou settest about this duty, (a) set God before thine eyes (as *David* did) and represent him to thy self under this notion of an Omnipresent all seeing God.

(a) How would you pray if men were present to see and hear you? *Sic loquere cum Deo quasi homines adstarent*, Seneca.

2. Conceive of God as one that is full of Majesty and Greatness. That passage, in *Mic.* 6. 6. *(Wherewithall shall I come before the Lord, and bow my self before the High God)* doth intimate what apprehensions we should have of God when we come into his presence; *viz.* That he is a High God, infinitely above any of his Creatures; betwixt him and the holy Angels, or the highest of the Children of Men, there is a

wider difference than betwixt the Potter and his clay. Oh how would this apprehension both quicken and awe us in prayer!

3. Conceive of God as one that is exceeding gracious and plenteous in mercy to all that call upon him. That known Scripture, *Heb.* 11. 6. *(He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of those that diligently seek him,* doth hint what conceptions we should have of God in prayer, as of one that is exceeding bountiful: we must believe not only his Being, but his Bounty: he gives not only what we ask, but more; yea *(b)* abundantly more than we can ask. Oh what quickning and confidence doth this notion of God afford! To apprehend God in his greatness doth *(c)* stir up fear and godly reverence; to apprehend God in his goodness, doth stir up Faith and holy boldness. God who is our Father, likes that we his Children should come before him in this manner; he gives us leave (so we do it awfully) to *(d)* speak all our minds to him. 'Tis said of *Flavius* the Emperour, that he would not that any man should present a Petition to him (as if he were offering meat to a Lion or Elephant) with a trembling hand: God likes that we should speak to him as one that spake to the great God, and with such confidence as became one that spake to his Father or Friend. *(d)* Ep. 3. 12. παῤῥησία. *Proprie est libertas dicendi, ex* πᾶν *omne &* ῥῆσις *dictio.*

(*b*) Eph. 3. 20. ὑπὲρ ἃ πάντων, *Supra quam reddunanter.*

(*c*) *Vitus Theod.* says of *Luther*; That he pray'd with such reverence

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ſhould lift up our hands to him, *as without wrath*, ſo *alſo* (*e*) *without doubting*.

(*e*) 1 Tim. 2. 8.

4. Conceive of God in prayer as one God, (*f*) not divided, and yet diſtinguiſhed into three Perſons, the Father, Son, and Spirit. This is a great myſtery, fitter for admiration, than humane conception; and yet all along this duty God muſt be thus apprehended, as one Subſtance in three Subſiſtences; as one Eſſence in three Relations: all which do concur to the prayers of Believers, and have a different office about them; there is the Father hearing, the Son interceding, and the Spirit helping their infirmities.

(*f*) *Vide* Dr. *Hall Deca.* 3. *Ep.* 7.

Laſtly, conceive of God not (*g*) abſolutely, but in *Chriſt*: God in himſelf is *a conſuming fire*, but in *Chriſt* he is a merciful Father. (*h*) *There is no coming to God but by him.* I might enlarge upon this head, but I forbear; only remember this, you will never pray to any purpoſe unleſs you carry along with you in your minds, a right notion and conception of that God to whom you pray.

(*g*) *Luther* was wont to ſay, *Nolo Deum abſolutum.*

(*h*) Hebr. 12. *ult.* (*h*) Hebr. 7. 25. *Themiſtocl.* underſtanding that King *Admetus* was angry with him took his young Son in his arms, and treated with the Father holding that his darling in his boſom, and thereby be appeaſed the Kings wrath. (*i*) Pſ. 87. 3.

5. Entertain and maintain very honourable thoughts of the duty of prayer it ſelf: this will both move you to the Duty, and marvellouſly quicken you in it. What the (*i*) *Pſalmiſt* ſays of the City of God, that may I ſay of the duty of prayer, *Great and*

glorious things are spoken of it. If any should ask me as that King did the Prophets Servant (*k*) *What great things hath thy Master done?* So what great things hath Prayer done? it would require more lines than I intend in all, to return a full answer. I might easily write a large history of the great exploits that Prayer hath done in the World. You read *Heb.* 11. of many wonderful effects of Faith, the effects & fruits of Prayer are as many, and as great. It hath (*l*) *Obtained promises. Subdued Kingdoms, turned to flight the armies of aliens; it hath raised the dead, stopt the Suns course, yea made it to go back. It hath opened prison-doors, and unlockt such secrets as have puzzled the Devil himself; it hath disappointed the plots of adversaries, and tumbled those into the pit themselves which they have maliciously digged for others. What shall I say more? it hath (m) opened Heaven, and shut it again.* These and such like memorable things have been brought to pass by the Prayers of such sinful and infirm Creatures as we our selves are.

(*k*) 1 Kings 8. 4.

(*l*) Dan. 9. 2, 3, 4. Isa. 37. 15, 16, &c. John 2. 1, 2, &c. Josh. 10. 12, 14. Act. 12. 5. Dan. 2. 18 2 Sam. 15. 31. Esth. 4. 16.

(*m*) Jam. 5. 17, 18.

Let me add this, it hath laid hold on God himself; and put him (as one says) to a merciful retreat, when he hath been marching in his anger against persons or People. *Jacob by prayer (n) had power with God,* and by wrestling with him, (*o*) wrested mercy

Ἠλίας ἄνθρωπος ὁμοιοπαθὴς ἡμῖν, προσευχῇ προσεύξατο τοῦ μὴ βρέξαι, καὶ οὐκ ἔβρεξεν ἐπὶ ἔτη τρία καὶ μῆνας ἕξ· καὶ πάλιν προσηύξατο, καὶ ὁ οὐρανὸς ὑετὸν ἔδωκε, καὶ ἡ γῆ ἐβλάστησε τὸν καρπὸν αὐτῆς. *Iisdem affectionibus obnoxius.*

(*n*) Hos. 12. 3. (*o*) *Cœlum tundimus, & misericordiam extorquemus,* Tertul.

from him. God speaks as if his hands were held and tyed up by Prayer; *Let me go,* saith he, *to Jacob*; and to *Moses*, (p) *Let me alone.* (q) One observes that God in *Exod.* 32. 10. doth indent as it were with *Moses*, and offer him composition, if he would hold his peace: *Let me alone*, saith he, *and I will make of thee a great People*; Wonderful is that passage (r) (if we read it right) in *Isa.* 45. 11. there God says, *Concerning the works of my hands command ye me.* These and the like expressions are to be admired, says the same Author, not strained, lest our thoughts degenerate into rude blasphemy: certainly they are mighty condescensions, wherein the Lord would signifie to us the great power and efficacy of Prayer.

I might bring many Scriptures and arguments to evince the prevalency of Prayer: but this is a common argument, and therefore I shall decline it. Onely consult *Matth.* 21. 22. where *Christ* says that *all things whatsoever we ask in prayer, believing, we shall receive.* This one promise is enough of it self to quicken the deadest soul that is, to prayer, and *Christ*'s manner of speaking here is observable; it had been (one would have thought) enough to have said, All things we ask in prayer ye shall receive; but here he adds, *all things whatsoever.* It seems to be a tautology: we don't speak in our ordinary discourse, I will give you all things

(p) *Aug.* on Exod. 32. 10. thus glosseth, *Domine, quis tenet te? &c.*

(q) *Manton* on Ja. 5. 8.

(r) Some read it interrogatively thus, *Concerning the works of my hands command ye me?*

whatsoever you ask. But this is not without its signification; *All things* (*s*) (says one) is a promise of generals, and *whatsoever* relates to particulars. 'Tis as if he had said, Not only all things in general, but every particular thing that you ask you shall receive; for though it be true that generals include particulars, yet such is the unbelief of our hearts, that though we assent to promises in the general, yet when it comes to particulars, we hold off, and fear they will not be made good to us. Hereto I might add that speech of *Christ* to the Woman of *Canaan*; (*t*) *Be it unto thee as thou wilt*, he seems to give her a blank, & bids her write down what she pleaseth.

But enough of this: My advice is, That you digest this notion well, and carry it along with you all the while you are at prayer, and it cannot but quicken you. As he must needs pray heartlesly, who think 'tis a bootless exercise, who is ready to say in his heart, *What profit is it that I pray unto God?* so he must necessarily (*u*) *pray in prayer* as 'tis said *Elias* did, who thinks that prayer, like *Jonathan*'s bow, doth (*w*) never return empty; but oftentimes as the Eccho doubleth the voice, so doth Gods answer our prayers. Rest assured of this, That every petition a Believer puts up on Earth is read and fil'd in Heaven: (*x*) 'Tis nigh God, and

(*s*) 'Tis Mr. *Burroughs* his glosse in one of his Books.

(*t*) It was said of *Luther*, *Iste vir apud Deum potuit quod voluit.*

Peruse that full Scripture 1 John 5. 14, 15.

(*u*) προσευχῇ προσηύξατο. Jam. 5. 17.

(*w*) Εὐχῆς δικαίας οὐκ ἀνήκοος ὁ Θεὸς. *Menander.*

(*x*) So was *Solomons*, 1 Kings 8. 59. and so is every believers.

in

in his view night and day; he gives the thing desired (y) or something that is better.

(y) *Nemo parvi pendat orationem suam, dico enim vobis, quod ipse ad quem oramus, non parvi pendit eam. Postquam egressa est ab ore nostro, ipse scribit eam in libro suo, & unum in duobus indubitanter expectemus, aut dabit quod petimus, aut quod novit utilius.* Greg. in Hom. super Evang.

6. Be much in the use of Ejaculatory prayer. Reader, if thou shouldst not understand the word, I will suppose thee acquainted with the thing: 'tis a short yet serious lifting up the soul in desires unto God, upon any occasion whatsoever. These ejaculatory prayers are either vocal, or mental only. If you read the Scripture, (z) you shall find this way of praying very familiar with the best of men, yea with *Christ* himself.

(z) Gen. 43. 14. & 49. 18. Nehe. 2. 4, 5. Judg. 16. 28. 2 Sam. 15. 31. Luke 23. 42. John 12, 26, 27. Luke 20. 21. & 23. 34, 39. Qu. If this be not intended by *David*, when he says, Psalm 119. 164. *Seven times a day do I praise thee.*

I could offer many things to commend it to you; as thus.

1. 'Tis very acceptable to God: he hath testified his accepting by his answering such ejaculations as these. *Davids* vocal ejaculation, *Turn (O Lord) I pray thee, the counsel of Achitophel into foolishness*; And *Nehemiah's* mental ejaculation, *Nehe.* 2. 4, 5. had present audience.

2. 'Tis very easily performed; all times and places are alike to it: whether you are

alone or in company, at home or abroad, you may in this way make known your requests unto God.

3. 'Tis an excellent means to keep the heart always in a heavenly frame: It helps you also to improve every Ordinance and Providence of God.

But lastly, which makes to our purpose, 'tis of special use to dispose us for solemn and (a) continued prayer. They that often in the day are thus lifting up their hearts to God, have them in tune when they betake themselves to that more solemn service. Praying thoughts and desires are with them in a readiness: these short breathings do prepare them for a longer race. They that are good (says one) at these running pulls and trips, must needs wrestle well with God. A candle that is just now put out, is soon lighted again: whilst the heart still glows, and is warm with these short Ejaculations, 'tis readily kindled and quickned in solemn secret Prayer.

(a) *Vide* Mr. *Gurnall's* 3 part of his *Compleat Christian Armour*, pag. 387.

It was a speech of a dying Saint, that he was going to change his place, but not his company.

My advice is, That you would accustom your self to these holy Apostrophe's, to these heavenly ejaculations: And yet I would caution you against doing this in a customary way. Formality (if you have not a care) will fly-blow, and corrupt this and every other good duty.

A Christian that is frequent in these Ejaculations, when he goes to pray more solemnly, he goes from God to God; from a more transient view of him to a more fixed, &c.

7. An-

7. Another help is this: Keep your art close to the duty, and suffer it not to ay or wander. A straying heart must eds be a straitned and a dead heart Prayer. How can a Christian have a ely and enlarged heart in a Duty, when hath no heart at all there? but that is) straggling in this and that corner of the arth: whilst he is speaking to God, his art is conversing with the World, insouch that he forgets many times in praywhat he spake last. (c) Oh what an dignity is offered unto GOD! and how he mockt by such praying as this! We ould have him attend to our payers, hen we do not attend to them our lves.

Vain thoughts in prayer are occasioned artly by the desperate wickedness and deitfulness of our own hearts; thence they o proceed as *Christ* shews, and that as eely as water from a fountain; and partly y the subtilty and malice of *Satan*; he eing a Spirit hath ready access to thy Spit, and thou never goest aside to pray but he ollows thee at the heels; and seeing he canot divert thee from, his desire is to distract hee in the duty. Sometimes he injects such houghts as are directly sinful, or if he finds hat these affright thee (as many times a Christian starts at these as at some ghostly pparition); then he casts such as are at other

(b) *Quasi nobis esset sermo cum homine vulgari interea grandum, omisso Deo, huc vel illuc transvolamus.* Calv. Inst. l. 4.

(c) *Magnam injuriam Deo facio, cùm precor ut meas preces exaudiat, quas ego qui fundo non exaudio. Deprecor illum ut mihi intendat, ego vero nec mihi nec illi intendo.*

times

times allowable and lawful; or if he see that these are unwelcome, then he injects such thoughts as are in themselves good & useful, only they are impertinent: these steals out of the heart again for the most part before the prayer is ended: though at other times he would oppose them, yet now he puts them forward as those that are most likely to find entertainment in thy soul. I suppose thy experience will let thee set the seal to this as true.

Now, if thou wouldst have thy heart enlivened and enlarged in prayer, remember to repel every vain or impertinent thought that comes in to thy disturbance: resist it; rise upon it; call help from Heaven against it. This is one fence we are to put upon the

(d) Ephes. 6. 18. Apostles *(d) watching unto prayer.* If at other times, then much more in prayer, we must keep our hearts with all keeping, or else, do what we can, they will give us the

(e) 'Tis Mr. *Garnals* comparison in *lib. practic.* slip. *(e)* As you do with your Children, so you had need to do with your childish minds; happily they go along with you to Church, but when you are set (if not awed by your eye) they steal forth and are gone; and it may be are playing all Sermon-time, or a good part of it, and you miss them not; to prevent this, you set them before you, and have an eye to them. You can apply it.

Remember this advice whenever you go to prayer; renew your resolution to watch against

ainſt vain thoughts; think how many
ayers they have (*f*) marr'd already; re
lve, that through grace, they ſhall not
oil this alſo.

8. Let the guilt of no one ſin ly upon thy
nſcience; that will ſo clog, diſquiet and
eck thy ſpirit in prayer, that thou wilt
ever be able to proceed with any life or en-
rgement. Guilt makes a Chriſtian ſhy of
oming into the preſence of God, as a faulty
ild plays leaſt in ſight, and ſteals away to
ed before the time, being loth to come
here his father is. So it is with a Chriſtian,
atis conſcious to himſelf of any fault or ſin
at he hath knowingly committed againſt
od; and as he is liſtleſs to come to pray-
, ſo he is lifeleſs in the duty; his ſin flies in
s face, ſo that he can't lift it up with any
nfidence: his heart upbraids him, and falls
quarrelling with him, and ſays, What haſt
ou to do to take Gods Name into thy
outh, *&c.*? if therefore thou wouldſt pray
s thou deſireſt, preſerve thy conſcience
ure and peaceable: Take heed of known
; (*b*) *of departing wilfully or wickedly* (as
Davids phraſe is) from God. There is (*i*) a
nning weakly, or through weakneſs; this
oth not ordinarily interrupt a Chriſtians
eace; and there is a ſinning wickedly, or
hrough wickedneſs; (ſo (*k*, *Jude* ſpeaks of
ommitting ungodly deeds ungodlily) this
ys waſte the conſcience; this deſtroys a
Chriſtians

(*f*) *Si vagetur mens noſtra, nullam è pracibus utilitatem percipimus, imo potiùs majorem damnationem.* Pet. Mart.

(*g*) *Tunc cor fiduciam in oratione accipit quum ſibi vitæ nulla pravitas contradicit.* Greg. in Mor.

(*b*) Pſal. 18. 21.

(*i*) *Peccata quotidiana incurſiones, & vulnera conſcientiam.*

(*k*) Jud 5.

Christians peace, and deadens his heart in duty: Oh! beware of sinning after this manner! if thou must abstain from every appearance of evil, then much more from every apparent evil! Oh fly from it when it comes near thee in a temptation, as thou wouldst do from a venemous serpent; shake it off as thou wouldst do an ugly toad that is crawling upon thee: Observe (*l*) *Eliphaz* his advice to *Job*, which is, *to put iniquity far from him*; not to come near it; and then, says he, *thou shalt lift up thy face to God, and make thy prayer unto him*: Thou shalt make many and mighty prayers; (as the (*m*) word there signifies) thou shalt not only use words in prayers, but words cloathed with power; thou shalt be able to pray, and to pour strong prayers in abundance unto God.

(*l*) Job 22. 22. with 26. 27.

(*m*) עדר *multiplicavit, proprie verba fortia in oratione cum multa copia fudit.*

Quest. But if sin hath already wounded my conscience and broken my peace, am I not to refrain prayer till it be healed again?

Ans. No; for this is not to mend the matter, but to make it worse. You cannot heal the wound of one sin by another: you must to *Christ* by Faith, and to God by prayer; and though there be a present deadness, yet ply the Throne of Grace, till the Lord speak peace to thy soul: & remember to do this presently; the sooner, the better; let not the Sun go down upon the breach betwixt God and thee: New breaches are made up better than long quarrels; and

green

green wounds are healed easier than old sores.

9. It will not a little help in this case, if you are provided beforehand both with matter, and a method in prayer. I observe that Christians are straitned in this duty, not only from the naughtiness of their heart, but from the emptiness of their heads; as sometimes (like *Zebedees* Children) they ask they know not what; so at other times they know not what to ask: They are often word-bound, (if I may so speak) and at a loss; they cannot tell how to go forwards, and therefore they go backwards, and vent themselves in vain repetitions. Now this great evil will be in part prevented, if they be stored beforehand with matter for prayer, & if they do observe a method in the duty.

Possibly upon the first reading of this Direction, you may reject it, as that which shuts out the immediate suggestions of the Spirit, and tends to formality; but weigh it well, & you will be of another mind: Take it upon the word of one that hath prov'd it; it is of admirable use to quicken and enlarge the heart in prayer; because from hence there is a continual supply of fresh matter, for want of which (your experience tells you that) you are exceedingly dulled and straitned. Tis true, sometime (and oh that it were so always!) we have such abundant assistance, such ravishing incomes from the

Spirit

Spirit of God, that we ſtand in no need
any ſuch help as this here offer'd; our ſpiri
are ſo raiſed, our affections are ſo up, we a
carried out ſo beyond our ſelves, that w
cannot be bounded by any premeditate
matter or method; but our hearts are n
always like the Chariots of *Aminadab*, b
too often like the Chariots of *Pharaoh*; w
drive on but heavily, for the moſt part,
this duty; and at ſuch times this directio
may have its uſe.

In order to ſtoring our ſelves with matte
and method for prayer, it would not be a
miſs, if you had heads, & common places
your minds, (or rather in writing) to whic
you might refer ſuch Scriptures and co
ſiderations, as do occur in Meditatio
by your ſelves, in conference with
thers, in reading or hearing the Word
God. Hitherto alſo you might refer the ſi
you have committed, the mercies you ha
receiv'd, the wants you would have ſuppli
the luſts you would have ſubdued, &c.
ſhould be ſome part of every days work
collect fit matter for prayer: This is anoth
way of watching thereunto; what Miniſte
do to fit themſelves for preaching, that
Chriſtians ſhould do to fit themſelves f
praying. They put all things they me
with (which may be of uſe) under their pr
per heads in Books which they have f
that purpoſe, that they may readily ha
recour

recourse thereto, whenever they have occasion. And so your collections must not be set down confusedly, but methodically and in order; else you will be to seek when you should make use thereof.

It would do well also if Christians would observe a method in their prayers throughout; this is of singular use to those who pray with others; because confused repetitions, and disorderly digressions cannot but dislike and deaden those that joyn with them; and it is not altogether useless in secret prayer; for now a man can never be at a stand, but still there will be an orderly succession of matter, which serves greatly to quicken and excite the heart and affections, as I have already hinted. (*n*) The Lords prayer, which is the standard or standing pattern of prayer, is very excellent (as many have observed) for method as well as matter; and hereby doubtless *Christ* would intimate to us, that the one is usefull as well as the others.

(*n*) Dr. *Gouge* his Guide to go to God. *Lambertus Danæus de Oratione Dominicâ*, &c.

Consult Dr. *Wilkins* his Discourse concerning the Gift of Prayer; there you will meet with an exact Method to be observed in prayer: Prayer by him is divided into two parts; 1. Less principal, *viz.* A Preface, apt Transitions, and the Conclusion: 2. More principal: 1. Confession; 2. Petition; 3. Thanksgiving: There you will find also scheams of these three more principal parts of Prayer.

Obj. You'l say, This advice cannot be put in practice without great pains and care, &

to

to me there seems no such need of it; for doubtless God is not taken with method of words in prayer, his eye is upon the heart and he observes its motion more than the motion of the tongue.

Answ. This is most true; and therefore it is not propounded as that which will affect or take with God, but as a means to quicken and enlarge our selves. And yet I must tell you too, that though the words we speak and the method we use do not affect God; yet to bespeak him in a confused careless, empty manner, cannot but offend him. I am sure it is very unbecoming the solemnity of the duty, and contrary to that reverence we owe unto the Divine Majesty. He that requires us to take heed how we hear when he speaks to us, doth look that we should take as (o) great heed what we say when we speak unto him. Weigh *Solomon's caution, Eccl.* 5. 2. *Let not thy heart be hasty to utter any thing before the Lord.* 'Tis you know the tongue's office to utter, and the heart's to conceive; why is it then said, *Let not thy heart be hasty to utter?* Because the heart should not suffer the tongue to utter what it had not first conceived and concocted. The reason of this caution is taken from the consideration of that infinite distance betwixt God and us: He is an *High and holy God that inhabiteth Eternity*; & thou (as (p) *Bernard* expresseth it) a vile Toad creeping

(o) *Nescit pœnitenda loqui qui proferenda prius tradidit examini. Cass.* l. 10. ep. 4.

(p) *E palude suâ procedens & repens vilis ranunncula.*

creeping and crawling out of its ditch; *He is in Heaven, and thou upon the Earth, therefore thy words should be few.* Why should our words be few? what! is God against long praying? No, surely, he is not tyred with the length, nor taken with the shortness of our prayers; but the reason of the clause is this, Because they who speak but little, do ponder what they say. Our tongues when we speak to Men (much less when we speak to *GOD*) should not run before our wit. We *should choose out words to reason with God* (as (q) *Job* speaks.) As we must beware of curiosity, so also of carelessness in those words which we utter before God in prayer. God ponders our words, and therefore we have reason to do our selves.

(q) Job 9. 14.

10. The tenth Direction shall consist of three or four particulars, which are prudential only, and may seem (till prov'd) little profitable.

1. Choose and use that gesture of Body which may serve best to quicken and excite my Spirit in this Service. And here I must premise, that there is no bodily gesture in prayer commanded by God, he hath left that to the prudence and piety of his People: therefore if you read the Scripture, you shall find the Saints of God to have used all the postures of the Body in this duty: indeed, kneeling hath been most in

practice, that is a posture of great reverence, and it is put (r) sometimes for the duty of prayer it self; not that it is essential to it, for you shall see the People of God in other postures at prayer; sometimes you read of their (ſ) proſtrating themſelves, or lying with their faces upon the ground; ſometimes again you read of their (t) ſitting; ſometimes of their (u) ſtanding, and ſometimes of their (w) walking. This laſt geſture, though leaſt in uſe, yet ſome have found it uſeful. Kneeling doth often diſpoſe to ſleep and drowſineſs, which ſtanding or walking doth prevent; and ſurely that geſture is moſt eligible which is found moſt effectual to keep off indiſpoſition, or to diſpoſe and fit a perſon for duty.

(r) Pſalm 95. 6. Eph. 3. 14. *A ſigno rem denotat, non quod oratio ſemper requirat genuflexionem, ſed quoniam hoc reverentiæ ſignum communiter adhibeatur, præſertim ubi non perfunctoria eſt ſed ſeria oratio.* Col. in locum.

(ſ) Mat. 26. 39. Joſh. 7. 6.

(t) 2 Sam. 7. 18.

(u) 1 Kings 8. 22. 2 Chron. 20. 9.

(w) Gen. 24. 63.

Hebrew שׂוּחַ which ſignifies, as to meditate, ſo to pray. *Vide Chald.* and *Genev.* Tranſlation, and *Tremell.*

Nay, my opinion is, that variety of geſtures, may be both lawful and uſeful at ſome times in this exerciſe. Surely Chriſtians may take that liberty when alone which would be unſeemly in the preſence of others. They may now kneel, and anon ſtand, and then walk; and ſo turn from one

geſture

geſture to another, as they find it will be more helpful to them for the end already mentioned. Yea, I doubt not, but in caſe of great ſtraitneſs upon their Spirits, they may make a ſtand or pauſe till they have by meditation recovered ſome new matter to continue the duty: They may turn from prayer to reading, and from reading again to prayer; from prayer to meditation, and from meditation again to prayer, as they ſee good. *Jerome* doth ſomewhere relate, how that finding himſelf ſluggiſh and dead in prayer, he left ſpeaking to God, and fell a ſpeaking to his own heart: *Think, O my Soul*, ſays he, *did Daniel thus pray when he was in the Lions den? or Jonah when he was in the Whales belly? Did the penitent Thief thus pray when he was upon the Croſs? &c.* And then he tells us that he went to prayer afreſh, when he had firſt rouſed up himſelf by theſe and ſuch like conſiderations.

2. Chooſe ſuch a place to pray in as is moſt convenient for this duty. Find out ſuch a place (if thou canſt) where thou mayeſt not be diſturbed by any noiſe in thine ears, nor be diverted by any object before thine eyes. *When thou prayeſt*, ſays Chriſt, *enter into thy Cloſet*: This counſel of *Chriſt* doth intimate, That Chriſtians when they pray ſhould have reſpect to the place in which they pray; the more cloſe, the more convenient. He adviſeth further *to ſhut the*

door; lest the wind of Vain-glory shoul
come in thereat. Our secret seeking of Goo
should not be open or visible to any else bu
God. 'Tis true when *Daniel* pray'd, *he se*
his window open, but it was to shew his Faith
(as one observes) not his pride.

Some may say, This rule doth not reac
us; we have no variety of Rooms to reti
into; poor People and servants, and such
like will be ready to say, We have n
choice.

But to such I would reply, Is there n
Garden, nor Grove, nor Field near you
into which you may withdraw? Wh
cannot you with *Isaac*, go forth at even
tide, or in the morning to meditate and t
pray? (*x*) Read what *Christ* did, *Mark*
35. and surely 'tis recorded for our imita
tion; 'tis said, *That in the morning a grea*
while before day he arose, and departed into
solitary place to pray.

(x) *Vide* Luke 5. 16. & 6. 12. & 22. 41. Matth. 14. 23.

3. It may conduce to the quickning o
thee to use thy voice in secret prayer. No
that God is taken with words, a few since
sighs from the heart do more affect him tha
the most Rhetorical expressions of th
tongue. But though words do not mov
God in prayer, yet experience teacheth, the
sometime move him that prayes. Th
Church says in the *Lamentations*, that he
eye did affect her heart: the same can man
a Christian say of his (*y*) tongue, that

(y) *Verbis.*

serve

erves to affect and quicken his heart in this duty.

Opus est inter orandum ad excitandos nos; alioquin Deus verbis non indiget. Aretius. *Vox inter orandum non absque fructu adhibetur, quoniam in precibus nonnunquam languescimus, & animus ipse defatigatur; unde vox inposita nos excitat, & quodammodo reficit.* Pet. Mart. loci communes Clas. 3. cap. 13.

Here I had need to give this caution, That as Christians should not pray to be seen of Men, so they should not speak in prayer to be heard of Men: If such are not Hypocrites, yet they will hardly escape the censure of Hypocrisie.

These ten are the principal helps and directions (according to the knowledge and experience that I have) for the lively performance of this great duty of secret prayer: I might offer more, but that I have already exceeded the ordinary limits of a Letter. Onely remember this, to be thorowly sensible of those things for which thou makest thy prayer unto God. This alone may quicken thee. How affectionately do they ask an alms, who see they must starve without it? Deadness in prayer ariseth from want of a deep sense of thy wants.

Remember also to set their examples before your eyes, who have performed this duty with life, enlargement, and importunity. Think you saw *Jacob* (z) *wrestling with God, and putting forth all his strength in prayer.*

(z) Gen. 32. 24. Hos. 12. 3.

Think you saw *Elias* praying earnestly, and (*a*) *putting his face between his knees.* Imagine you saw *Christ* groveling upon the ground in the Garden, (*b*) *offering up supplications, with strong cryes and tears*; repeating that request again and again, (*c*) *Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.* Call to mind the poor Widdows importunity or impudence, (as the word signifies) who would have no nay. (*d*) Examples sway with us more sometimes than any rules or precepts.

(*a*) 1 Kings 18. 42.

(*b*) Hebr. 5. 1.

(*c*) Matth. 26. 34.

(*d*) *Magis ducimur exemplis quam præceptis.*

If none of all this will help thee, then fall down before God, bewailing thy deadness, confessing thy sluggishness: say (as they in *Isaiah*) (*e*) *I have not called upon God, nor stirred up my self to take hold of him.* O how like a dead dog am I before the Lord! Will the living God accept of such dead duties as mine are? Oh how justly may God be angry with, and shut out my prayers! (*f*) By my coldness in asking, I even prompt God to deny me.

(*e*) Isaiah 64. 7.

(*f*) *Qui frigide rogat, docet negare.*

Yea, not only bemoan, but chide thy self: say, Why art thou so dead, O my Soul, and why art thou so sottish within me? Rouse up thy self (*g*) as *Deborah* did: Say, *Awake, awake, O my Soul, awake, awake*: Bespeak thy self, as the Shipmaster did the Prophet *Jonah*; (*h*) *What meanest thou?* O sluggard, *arise, call upon thy God.*

(*g*) Judges 5. 12.

(*h*) Jonah 1. 6.

Lastly, Lift up strong cryes (mingled with tears, if thou canst) unto God, that he would

would lend his helping hand, as *David* did, *Pſal.*80.18. *Quicken me, O Lord, to call upon thy Name.* Send thy quickning Spirit into my heart. How *(i)* oft doth *David* make his requeſt in the 119 Pſalm? ever now and then this requeſt comes in; *Quicken me, O Lord: Quicken me according to thy word: Quicken me according to thy righteouſneſs: Quicken me for thy Names ſake,* &c. 'Tis not vain repetition, but a plain manifeſtation, both of his great need and of his earneſt deſire of this Bleſſing.

(i) Ten times.

Mr. *Baxter*'s 15 Directions about the like caſe; ſee his *Chriſt. Direct. p.*597.

Qu. How ſhould a Chriſtian keep up an ordinary fervency in prayer?

Queſtion. How to keep up fervency in prayer.

Anſw. 1. *See that* Knowledge *and* Faith *provide you* matter: *For as the fire will go out if there be no fewel; ſo* fervency *will decay, when you are* dry, *and ſcarce* know what *to ſay; or do not well* believe *what you underſtand.* 2. *Clog not the Body either with over-much eating and drinking, or over-tiring labours: For an active Body helpeth much the activity of the mind: And the holieſt perſon will be able but poorly to exerciſe his fervency, under a dull or languiſhing Body.* 3. *Ruſh not ſuddenly upon prayer, out of a crowd of other buſineſſes, or before your laſt worldly cares or diſcourſes be waſhed clean out of your minds.*

In Study *and* Prayer *how certain a truth is it that* Non bene fit quod occupato animofit (*Hieron. Epiſt.* 143. *ad Paulin.*) *That wor is not well done, which is done with a mind tha is prepoſſeſſed, or buſied about other matters That mind muſt be* wholly free *from all othe preſent* thoughts *or* buſineſs, *that will either pray or ſtudy well.* 4. *Keep a tender hear and conſcience that is not ſenſeleſs of your ow concernments: For all your prayers muſt need be ſleepy, if the heart and conſcience be onc hardned ſeared or fallen aſleep.* 5. *Take mor pains with your hearts than with your tongues Remember that the ſucceſs of your wor lyeth moſt on them. Bear not with their ſlug giſhneſs: Do by them as you would do by you Child or Servant that ſleepeth by you at prayer You will not let them ſnort on, but jog them ti you have awakened them. So do by your heart when you find them dull.* 6. *Live as in the con tinual preſence of God; but labour to appre hend his ſpecial preſence when you are abou to ſpeak to him: Ask your hearts how the would behave themſelves if they ſaw the Lord or but the loweſt of his holy Angels?* 7. *Le Faith be called up to ſee Heaven and Hell a open all the while before you; and ſuch a figh will ſurely keep you ſerious.* 8. *Keep* Death *an* Judgment *in your continual remembrance an expectation: Remember how all your prayer will be looke back upon. Look not for long life: Remember that this prayer for ought yo*

know

now may be your last: but certainly you have no long to pray. Pray therefore as a dying Man should do. 9. *Study well the unspeakable necessity of your Souls: If you prevail not for pardon, and grace, and preservation, you are undone and lost for ever. Remember that necessity is upon you, and Heaven or Hell are at the end, and you are praying for more than a thousand lives.* 10. *Study well the unspeakable excellency of those mercies which you pray for: O think how blessed a life it would be if you could know God more, and love him more, and live a blameless heavenly Life; and then live with* Christ *in Heaven for ever? Study those mercies till the flames of Love put life into your prayers.* 11. *Study well the exceeding encouragements that you have to pray and hope: If your* Hope *decay, your* Fervour *will decay. Think of the unconceivable Love of God, the astonishing mercy shewed to you in your Redeemer, and in the helps of the* Holy Spirit, *and how* Christ *is now interceding for you: Think of these till* Faith *make glad your heart: And in this gladness let Praise and Thanksgiving have ordinarily no small share in your prayers: for it will tire out the heart to be alwayes poreing on its own distempers, and discourage it to look on nothing but its infirmities: And then a sad discouraged temper will not be so lively a temper, as a thankful, praiseful, joyful temper is: For* Lætitia loquax res est, atque ostentatrix sui: Gladness is a very expressive thing,

thing, and apt to ſhew it ſelf. *But*, Triſtes non eloquentes ſunt; maxime ſi ad ægritudinem animi accedat corporis ægritudo. *Hieronym. Epiſt.* 31. *ad Theophil. Alexand.* Sad Men are ſeldom eloquent; eſpecially if the Body be ſick as well as the Mind. 12. *Let the Image of a* praying *and a* bleeding Chriſt *and of his* praying Saints *be* (*not on a wall before your eyes, but*) *engraven on your minds: Is it not deſirable to be conformed to them? Had they more need to pray importunately than you?* 13. *Be very cautelous in the uſe of* forms, *leſt you grow dull and cuſtomary, and before you are aware your tongues uſe to go without your hearts. The heart is apt to take its eaſe when it feeleth not ſome urgent inſtigation. And though the preſence of God ſhould ſerve turn without the regard of Man, yet with imperfect Men, the heart is beſt held to its duty when both concur. And therefore moſt are more cautelous of their* words, *than of their* thoughts: *As children will learn their Leſſon better when they know their Maſters will hear them it, than when they think he will not. Now in the uſe of a* Form *of prayer, a ſleepy heart is not at all diſcerned by Man but by God only: For the words are all brought to your hand, and may be ſaid by the moſt dull and careleſs mind: But when you are put to expreſs your* own deſire, *without ſuch helps, you are neceſſitated to be ſo mindful of what you do, as to form your deſires into apt expreſſions, or elſe your*

Symmach. Epiſt. 31. *l.* 1. *ad Auſon.*

ur dulneſs or inattentiveneſs will be obſerved
en by Men: and you will be like one that
ith his Coach, or Horſe, or Crutches taken
rom him, that if he have legs muſt uſe them, or
ſe lye ſtill. And to them that are able, it is
ften a great benefit, to be neceſſitated *to uſe*
he ability they have: Though to others it is a
eſs to be deprived of their helps. I ſpeak not
his againſt *the* lawfulneſs *of a form of pray-*
r; but to warn you of the temptations which
re in that way. 14. *Joyn oft with the moſt ſe-*
rious fervent Chriſtians: For their fervour
will help your hearts to burn, and carry you
along with them. 15. *Deſtroy not fervency by*
adulterating it, and turning it into an affected
earneſtneſs of ſpeech, and loudneſs of voice,
when it is but an hypocritical cover for a frozen
empty heart.

Reader, if by theſe hints thou art any way help't to pray: Then remember the *Author* in thy Prayers.

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